



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

15 August 2019

Excellency,

As President of the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, I have ensured that gender equality and women's empowerment remains one of my foundational priorities. To this end, in March 2019, I convened a High-level event on 'Women in Power' that concluded with a 'Call for Action', with eight key areas for equality and women's empowerment, which was launched in the presence of 15 leaders who participated in the event. As of today, over 26 women world Leaders have signed up to the call for action.

I am equally pleased to inform that in the context of the International Women's Day of 8 March 2019, 47 women leaders, joined together to forge "Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion". The initiative brought together women, who as part of their individual profiles and professional trajectories, have forged significant contributions from the unifying perspective of multilateral agendas.

In order to achieve maximum impact across societies, I have called for interaction between the two initiatives and in this respect, I am convening an "Informal High-level Event of the General Assembly: Women in Power - Call to Action & Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion: Joining forces and redoubling efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment for all" to be held on 12 September 2019 from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., at the United Nations Headquarters, New York. A concept note is enclosed.

The informal High-level Event of the General Assembly has the objective to call for synergies and to garner the confluence and momentum generated by the above mentioned Call for Action and Women Leaders - voices for change and inclusion initiative and to strengthen the cooperation between global and UN networks.

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

This event on gender equality and empowerment of women will be the last of this theme during my tenure, and it aims at addressing the results of the strategy developed during the seventy-third session to push forward the gender equality and empower of women and to build momentum for the preparation of the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

In this respect, I have the honor to invite you to engage personally and participate in an interactive discussion with the group of eminent panelists that have been assembled for this event. I am certain that your participation will be very valuable and will enrich our discussion.

I also will encourage the participation of young diplomats from the Permanent Missions.

I look forward to welcoming you at this important meeting.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés



Concept Note

Informal High Level Event of the General assembly:

Women in Power - Call to Action &

Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion:

Joining forces and redoubling efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment for all

September 12, 2019

ECOSOC Chamber

As President of the United Nations General Assembly's 73rd Session (September 2018-September 2019), H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa has ensured that gender equality and women's empowerment are among the foundational priorities during her tenure. To this end in March 2019, following her High-Level event 'Women in Power' the President of the General Assembly (PGA) launched her Call to Action for equality and women's empowerment together with 22 leaders who participated in the high-level event. The Call for Action identifies eight key areas to ensure women's leadership through concrete efforts in the areas of policy making and advocacy.

The President also established an informal Group of eminent leaders to identify the obstacles that impede women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels. The Group met in two occasions to share ideas and experiences on the issue of women's leadership.

Also in the context of International Women's Day – 8th March 2019 – to call attention to the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women and to underscore the need to actively counter threats posed to the multilateral agenda that is inextricably linked with the core values and objectives of promoting the rights of women and girls globally – 47 women leaders joined together to forge Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion.

Conceived and led by Helen Clark, former prime minister of New Zealand from 1999 to 2008 and Director General of the United Nations Development Programme from 2009 to 2017, Irina Bokova former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria and Director General for UNESCO from 2009 to 2017, and Susana Malcorra, former Minister of

Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina 2016-17 and Chef de Cabinet of Secretary-General from 2012-2015, the initiative brought together women who as part of their individual profiles and professional trajectories have forged significant contributions from the unifying perspective of multilateral agendas for promoting humanitarian relief, advocating for human rights principles and normative policies, advancing sustainable development, and seeking to lend solution to some of the world's most complex conflicts and challenges.

The initiative also garnered the strong support of the President of the United Nations General Assembly (PGA) who, in her letter dated 25 March 2019 commended the efforts of the Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion initiative, underscoring her focus on bolstering gender equality and women's empowerment as priorities and calling attention to her Call to Action that identifies the eight key areas to ensure women's leadership through concrete efforts in the areas of policy making and advocacy. In voicing her support, the PGA stressed that "as women leaders, we have a special responsibility to raise our voices in support of gender equality and inclusion everywhere..." Joining the Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion in her personal capacity, the PGA also expressed her hope that synergies could be created "between the two initiatives by joining forces and redoubling our efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment for all."

In this context the informal event of the General Assembly under the leadership of both initiatives has the objective to call for synergies and to garner the confluence and momentum generated by the PGA's Call to Action and the Women leaders - voices for change and inclusion initiatives.

In particular the event will be focus on:

1. Create synergies with networks that encourage women participation and support the sharing of knowledge and experience (based on point 3 of the Call for Action)
2. Consider measures to create an environment where gender equality is respected, and inclusion is part of the organizational culture in all spheres of society, including the role of men in gender equality (based on point 8 of the Call for Action)
3. Promote the mentoring of young women to strengthen their capacity to participate in politics (based on point 1 of the Call for Action)

The event also will bring the opportunity to address the results of the strategy developed by the President of the General Assembly to push forward the gender equality and empower of women agenda in the work of the General Assembly and to gain momentum for the preparation of the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action.